

Why Am I Here?

“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you too should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

-- John 13:14-15

The fourth of our 7 *vital questions* is one that has as much to do with an intentional and authentic Christian life as just about anything else. It is a question that is aimed at helping us uncover the very purpose behind our lives, and it will determine the nature of everything we do, and the attitude with which we do it. Each of us asks this question at some point in our lives, whether we are trying to choose a career path or just generally reflecting on the direction of our lives, “*Why am I here?*”

It must be said that there are as many answers to this question as there are people in the world, because in some way God has called each one of us to a specific task. But there is also some truth in pointing out that there are certain universally true answers to this question as well. Answers that are relevant and applicable regardless of what we have chosen to ‘do’ with our lives. One such answer comes clearly in John 13:14-15.

We have been called to SERVE! Why am I here? To serve.

It may be as a teacher, or an accountant or an engineer or a musician or anything else we could think of dreaming about becoming and being, but in each one of these life-directions it should be this one characteristic that marks who we are and defines why we are here... service.

The service that Jesus exemplifies in this passage and calls us to emulate is a service of selflessness in the highest degree. It is a service that demands we lay aside our own interests and desires, even if we might feel entitled to these, and focus on the needs of others. It is a service of humility in action. There should be no act of service too low for us, too demeaning or demanding. We are not exalted above any course of action, even if we might think that particular course of action would be beyond our job description or too menial for us. Jesus did not even consider the worst of all slave-jobs in the ancient world beneath Him. Finally, this service is a service of indiscriminate giving. The service Jesus calls us to exercise does not have favourites; it cannot be reserved for those we like and love or those with whom we want to carry favour. Jesus did not only wash the feet of his favourite disciples, he also washed the feet of Judas (who He knew would betray Him), and Peter (who He knew would deny Him), and all the other disciples (whom He knew would abandon Him). Jesus serves all people with a remarkable and admirable consistency.

The service that we are called to emulate in whatever work we do, wherever and whenever we do the things we do, is a service of selflessness, humility and consistency. Is this what characterizes our work and living? It should be, because this is why we are here.

As you continue to reflect on these thoughts, here are some questions that might help:

1. Are you satisfied with what you do for a living, or are you excited about what you plan to do for a living one day?
2. If not, why? If yes, why?
3. In what ways can you use the work you, or are planning to do, to serve others in a selfless, humble and consistent way?
4. Set your mind on one act of selfless and humble service that you can do today... and do it.

Prayer:

Most gracious and loving Lord. How wonderful the thought that you have set this example of service for us. You are our Lord and Master, and yet even you did not come to be served but to serve. Help us to hear in every situation your words of invitation and encouragement to us; that we should serve. Forgive us for wanting to be served rather than to serve and give us the grace and strength we need to live lives of service. In your name, our servant King, we humbly pray. Amen.

Food for thought:

“In the Kingdom of God, service is not a stepping-stone to nobility: it *is* nobility, the only kind of nobility that is recognized.” – T.W. Manson